

DESTRUCTION BY DESIGN

by Barbara Jackson

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

It's dark, quiet in the warehouse district. From nowhere police cars with lights flashing and sirens blasting invade, screeching to a stop at one of the buildings. Doors fling open, ejecting highly armored police personnel. The assault team storms the building, while the backup force positions themselves.

A black limo in the b.g. slows down briefly, resumes cruising speed.

INT. LIMO - NIGHT

A black leather glove taps out the last four numbers on a cellular phone.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - NIGHT

A slit of light slips from behind a window shade. The cabin would look deserted had it not been for that light. It's a mountain quiet - bugs buzzing, branches rustling. A cellular phone CHIRP brings this rustic scene into the modern world.

INT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - NIGHT

It's a sophisticated chemical laboratory, complete with several liquid chromatography instruments. A yellow liquid bubbles up through a reflux condenser. Two figures clad in white jump suits, masks and latex gloves work together at a bench. The phone CHIRPS. A gloved hand hits the button of the speaker phone.

VOICE (O.S.)

Mayday! Mayday!

Moving rapidly as if in a fire drill, the two figures dismantle the experiment. All the liquids are poured into a porcelain coated dish bucket.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - JUST BEFORE DAWN

One of the figures in the white jump suit, emerges from the cabin carrying the bucket. The liquid sloshes around in the bucket, spilling some out. The figure walks through the woods, comes to a stream, and pours the liquid into the stream.

EXT. STREAM - JUST BEFORE DAWN

As the liquid enters the stream, it glistens in the moonlight. The water carries the glistening liquid over rocks as it travels downstream. As the water passes over a series of rocks, the cascade glistens.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAWN

The rising sun reflects off a stream. DEBBIE TSEN, an attractive Asian woman in her twenties, bends down at the stream and fills a gallon plastic jug. She inhales deeply to take in the fresh air, content with the world.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAWN

Fishing poles lean against the wall of one of the two small tents. LISA LITTLETON, wearing cutoff jeans and a tee shirt, sits on a log and types on her notebook computer. ERIC PETERS, looking like an ad for the L.L. Bean catalog, fries bacon at the campfire. CARLOS RODRIGUEZ, a tall Hispanic, walks over to Lisa, plants a kiss on her neck, reads her computer screen.

CARLOS

(reads off screen)

In the wilderness the glorious
smell of bacon frying almost makes
this city girl forget about fat
grams and salt content. It is as
if a direct commune with nature
purifies everything associated with
urban living.

(beat)

So, you are enjoying your first
camp out.

LISA

Very much. My editor is going to
love this.

ERIC

We'll have some amaretto coffee as
soon as Debbie returns with the
water.

Debbie emerges from the woods.

DEBBIE

The water nymph has arrived.

Debbie fills the coffee pot, places it next to the frying pan. Lisa goes to the cooler, removes the cap from a plastic lemon, squirts a goodly amount of lemon juice in a glass, raises the glass for Debbie to see.

LISA

Some mountain Perrier, please.

Debbie fills up Lisa's glass. There may have been some bubbling when the water hits the lemon juice, but it's hard to tell.

DEBBIE

Don't you miss the caffeine?

LISA

Not any more.

CARLOS

She eats right, exercises regularly, meditates daily. It's going to take a Mack truck to prove she's not immortal.

The SOUNDS OF A TRUCK MOTOR and TIRES ON GRAVEL are heard in the b.g. Eric places the bacon on a plate, walks to get a view of the road. Debbie catches up with Eric and places her arm around his waist.

DEBBIE

See anything?

ERIC

It looked like a small moving van.

DEBBIE

What's it doing up here?

ERIC

Don't know. Maybe they're lost.

The beeper on Eric's belt BEEPS. Eric pulls it off to read the number.

DEBBIE

I don't believe it. Some getaway!

ERIC
It's my brother.

DEBBIE
Lucky shot. It could have just as easily been a client. Invite Bob up for fish de jour. I'll finish making breakfast.

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Breakfast completed, Debbie refills her cup and Eric's. A bird flies over head to the woods. Eric reaches for his binoculars.

ERIC
A red-headed woodpecker. Be right back.

Eric sips his coffee and heads in the direction of the woodpecker. Debbie gestures with the coffee pot to Carlos.

DEBBIE
Top it off?

Carlos nods. Debbie fills his cup. Carlos drinks some, lies on the ground, closes his eyes.

CARLOS
I love the sounds. If you listen closely, you can hear nature's symphony.

Lisa squirts some more lemon juice in her glass, fills it up with water. She returns to her computer, reads the screen.

Debbie cups her hands around her coffee, inhales deeply, breathing the aroma.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

A compact car pulls next to the other two vehicles. BOB PETERS, Eric's brother, steps out of his car, walks in the direction of the camp site.

BOB
(calls out in a
feminine voice)
Honey, I'm home.

Bob pushes aside some branches as he walks.

BOB
(continuing in a
John Wayne voice)
All right, men. We've got their
camp surrounded.

Bob stops abruptly. His face blanches in fear.

BOB
(continuing)
Good God!

EXT. CAMP SITE - DAY

Lisa is sprawled on the ground. Her eyes are wide open but vacant-looking. A screen saver plays on her computer. Carlos is motionless on the ground Debbie is on her face on the ground.

Bob rushes to Carlos. Feels his neck pulse.

Bob turns Debbie on her back. He bends down to see if she's breathing. She is. He turns his head scanning the area. He stumbles around, searching.

BOB
(continuing)
Eric!

His eyes lock on a foot path. He sprints to it, goes a short way into the woods. Stops, frantically looks about.

ERIC

lies, eyes wide-open, on the ground. His hands are frozen around his binoculars.

BOB
No!

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Two parked ambulances and a police car flash their lights. Two EMT's lift Eric's gurney into the ambulance. Bob grabs the sleeve of one EMT.

BOB
Will he be okay?

EMT

His breathing and heart rate are
normal. That's all I can say.

The EMT jumps into the ambulance, slams the door shut.
BILL GATTER, waits until the ambulance pulls away,
approaches Bob, extends his hand.

GATTER

Bill Gatter, special investigator.
You the brother?

BOB

Yeah. What happened?

GATTER

Don't know at this point. There's
no sign of violence. Whatever it
was it took them by surprise. No
sign of a struggle. Almost like
they were zapped in their tracks.

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

In the b.g. hospital personnel rush a gurney down the
corridor. The two EMT's wheel Eric's gurney into the room.
An EMERGENCY ROOM DOCTOR gives a split second evaluation of
Eric's condition.

ER DOC

Send a blood sample down to the lab
for a drug screening. Stat. Start
an IV. Get the monitors in here.

The hospital personnel flock about the gurney like bees in
a hive - each one moving rapidly with a purpose.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) In a semiprivate room Eric and Carlos lie on their beds.
Both have IV's running into their arms. A nurse takes a
blood sample.

B) A similar scene occurs in Debbie's and Lisa's room.
Lisa is in a fetal position.

C) In the clinical laboratory a physician checks a printout
from an instrument. The physician shakes his head.

D) An unconscious Carlos is on the table for the PET scanner. The table moves slowly forward placing Carlos's head in the donut-shaped opening.

E) One physician points to a red-colored area on a brain PET scan on a viewing box. The other physician slides another brain PET scan next to it for comparison.

INT. ERIC'S AND CARLOS'S ROOM - DAY

A drawn cloth divider curtain partitions the room. A PHYSICIAN and a NURSE read a chart at the foot of Eric's bed. Eric and Carlos are still unconscious.

WHITE OUT

ERIC (O.S.)

AAAAARGH!

INT. ERIC'S AND CARLOS'S ROOM - DAY

Eric bolts upright in the bed. He covers his eyes with his hands. The Physician and Nurse are on either side of his bed.

PHYSICIAN

What's the problem?

ERIC

My eyes. Everything is so bright.

The Physician gently takes Eric by the shoulders and has him lie flat.

ERIC

Where am I? What happened?

PHYSICIAN

You're in a hospital. We're not sure what happened. You and the others were found unconscious at the camp site.

ERIC

Carlos, Debbie, and Lisa were unconscious also?

PHYSICIAN

Yes. Can you shed any light on what happened?

ERIC

The last thing I remember was
watching a woodpecker with my
binoculars.

(beat)

How long have I been here?

PHYSICIAN

Twenty-four hours.

ERIC

How are the others?

PHYSICIAN

You are the first to regain
consciousness. How are your eyes
doing?

Eric cautiously opens his eyes, closes them. Tries again,
settling for a very small slit opening.

ERIC

It seems bright, but I feel like
I'm adjusting somewhat.

PHYSICIAN

Good. Good.

VOICE (O.S.)

YEOW!

FULL VIEW OF THE ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Carlos holds his ears, rocking his head back and forth.
The Physician rushes to Carlos's bed.

PHYSICIAN

What's wrong?

CARLOS

(whispering)

Stop shouting. The noise.

The Physician and Nurse exchange nervous glances.

NURSE

I'll get the neurologist on call.

CARLOS

(whispering)

I asked you not to shout.

Eric looks over to Carlos's bed. Terror fills his face.

ERIC

Oh, my God!

From Eric's POV we see the Nurse leaving and the Physician spinning around in Eric's direction. The curtain is intact on the periphery, but non-existent where the scene is focused.

The Physician pulls open the 'holey' curtain. Carlos has his hands cupped over his ears.

PHYSICIAN

Are you in pain?

ERIC

No. Something is wrong with my eyes.

CARLOS

(loud whisper)

Stop shouting.

INT. DEBBIE'S AND LISA'S ROOM - DAY

Debbie bolts to a sitting position in her bed. She brings her hand to her mouth and starts gagging. NURSE 2, who has been taking Lisa's pulse, rushes to Debbie.

DEBBIE

Uuuggh. Uuuggh.

NURSE 2

What's the problem?

DEBBIE

The odors. They are overpowering.

(beat)

Don't you smell them?

NURSE 2

No. Nothing out of the ordinary.

DEBBIE

What happened? Why am I in a hospital?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

At the front wall of the conference room is a large view box with several brain PET scans. A NEUROLOGIST, shuffles through some papers. Debbie, Carlos, and Eric are in their bathrobes. Bill Gatter enters the room, nods to Carlos.

CARLOS

Bill? What's your connection here?

GATTER

There's something happening with the drug boys. I think there may be a tie in here. I want to hear what the doc has to say.

NEUROLOGIST

I can give you all the information we have. But at this point we don't know what to make of it.

The Neurologist flips a PET scan in front of the four scans on the view box.

NEUROLOGIST

(continuing)

This is a PET scan for a normal brain.

GATTER

Is this like an x-ray or what?

NEUROLOGIST

No. It's more sophisticated than that. It lets us know what part of the brain is using sugar for energy.

(beat)

Here's the scan for Eric's brain after he was admitted. There was increased activity in his occipital lobes. The part of the brain that processes vision. And in the cerebellum, which is involved in coordination.

ERIC

Would that explain the quirky stuff with my vision?

NEUROLOGIST

Maybe. This is new ground for us.

The Neurologist takes down that PET scan.

NEUROLOGIST

(continuing)

Here's the scan for Carlos. The increased activity was in the temporal lobes and the cerebellum. The temporal lobes are concerned with hearing.

CARLOS

My sensitive hearing.

NEUROLOGIST

And Debbie's areas was in the olfactory area and cerebellum.

DEBBIE

What about Lisa's? What happened to her?

NEUROLOGIST

Ms. Littleton's was in the amygdala, the emotional center. And of course, in the cerebellum. As of now, she has not regained consciousness.

ERIC

What caused this?

NEUROLOGIST

You have been exposed to some unknown agent. Mr. Gatter?

GATTER

It looks like a designer drug lab was located upstream from your camp site. They may have poured something in the water.

Carlos pounds his fist on the table.

CARLOS

Not drugs. Oh, God, no.

ERIC

Which drug? How did it work?

NEUROLOGIST

There wasn't any measurable amount of a known drug in your system. It may be a new compound or an

intermediate in the synthesis of
the compound.

DEBBIE

I'm a chemist. Is this anything
like the designer drug disaster in
California in '82?

NEUROLOGIST

It could be.

ERIC

How about letting us peons in on
what you are talking about.

DEBBIE

An underground chemist was making
MPPP, a synthetic heroin, and wound
up with a lot of MPTP product. The
MPTP zeroed in on a section of the
brain and the people were literally
frozen. They couldn't move or talk.

ERIC

I'm sorry I asked. What happened?

DEBBIE

The drug destroyed the neurons in
the area of the brain call
substantia nigra. The same area
affected by Parkinson's disease.
Treatment with drugs used in
Parkinson's seemed to help.

CARLOS

That's not what happened to us,
right? It didn't hit that section
of our brains.

NEUROLOGIST

I don't think so. But we don't
know what it is either.

CARLOS

Bill, this is your area. What are
your thought on what's happening?

GATTER

I think we're dealing with 3-methyl
fentanyl or some derivative
thereof. The fentanyl is three

thousand times more potent than morphine and the duration of action and the high associated with it are indistinguishable from heroin. And the profit margin is astronomical. A two thousand dollar investment would yield a kilo of heroin worth about one million on the streets. But that same two thousand dollar investment in methyl fentanyl would be worth one billion dollars on the street!

ERIC

Why aren't these labs springing up everywhere?

GATTER

The drug is very difficult to make. The chemistry involved could not be done in a biker lab.

DEBBIE

You're talking about a world class chemist here, right?

GATTER

I think so.

CARLOS

And big bucks.

ERIC

And in our case deep doo doo.

INT. LISA'S ROOM

Carlos, standing at the bedside, strokes Lisa's hair. His eyes well up.

CARLOS

First Hector, and now you. Dear God, why? I feel so helpless.

Carlos' face changes like an animal in the wild, who has been startled. He looks to the door. There is a change in the light pattern under the door. The door opens, Gatter enters.

GATTER

How's she doing?

CARLOS

No change.

GATTER

I'm sorry.

CARLOS

I'm going to nail the bastards who did this. I'm still trying to find the bastard responsible for Hector's overdose.

GATTER

I know Hector's death hit you pretty hard.

CARLOS

Damn hard. Straight-to-the-soul hard. I idolized my big brother - so smart, so athletic, so dead. I will have justice.

GATTER

It has always puzzled me why you are a defense attorney rather than a prosecuting attorney.

CARLOS

LBJ once said he'd rather have his enemies inside his tent pissing out, than outside his tent pissing in. I want to be on the inside and see what's happening.

GATTER

You can't use any of that information. Client attorney privilege.

CARLOS

That's what everyone thinks, so their guard is let down. I can find out information and let others follow up on it and destroy the bastards. The worst thing that could happen is that I'd get disbarred.

GATTER

Or dead.

INT. RESTAURANT -- DAY

Debbie, Eric, and Carlos sit a table. The waitress walks away writing down their order on a pad.

DEBBIE

I'm finally able to control the odor input. I thought I was going to go crazy.

ERIC

You could pinch your nose shut.

DEBBIE

Or just wear a clothes pin on it.

CARLOS

Or put a cow ring through it.
Newest rage in body piercing.

DEBBIE

Sometimes it can be fun to try and single out odors.

(closes her eyes,
sniffs)

The cook is shaking pepper on the hamburgers.

Carlos closes his eyes.

CARLOS

I can hear it. Oops, he's finished with the pepper.

Eric stares in the direction of the kitchen.

ERIC

Your are both right.

(grimaces)

He's rubbing his nose with his wrist.

DEBBIE

Thanks for sharing that with us.

INT. UNIVERSITY LABORATORY - DAY

Debbie, in her lab coat and goggles, attaches a condenser to a distillation flask. DR. JON HROVAC, her thesis advisor, enters the lab, places one of the two lab notebooks on Debbie's work space.

HROVAC
How's it going?

DEBBIE
O.K. I think.

HROVAC
Your data looks real good. I can
see a light at the end of your
tunnel - the future Doctor Tsen.

DEBBIE
How long is my tunnel?

HROVAC
Recrystallize your compound and
your research is finished.

DEBBIE
That's great, I'm ...

Debbie's knees give way from under her. She reaches to the lab bench to steady herself, but her hands are limp. As she slumps, Hrovac reaches for her, eases her to the floor. He places the other notebook on the bench. He props her up to a sitting position.

HROVAC
What happened?

DEBBIE
My muscle coordination went.

Hrovac props Debbie's back against the side of the lab bench.

HROVAC
I'll call an ambulance.

DEBBIE
No wait. I'm feeling a little
better. My coordination is
returning.

Debbie moves her fingers, sways a little, stands up.

HROVAC
I'm sorry.

DEBBIE
Don't be. It's nothing you've done.

HROVAC
Go home and rest up.

DEBBIE
I will. I'll go over the notes in
my lab book.

Debbie takes the second lab notebook. Distracted, Hrovac
picks up Debbie's book and leaves.

INT. HROVAC'S OFFICE - DAY

The office is cluttered with books, journals and molecular
models. A very agitated Hrovac speaks on the phone.

HROVAC
I didn't count on anything like
this.
(beat)
All right. I'm on my way.

Hrovac grabs the lab notebook and storms out the door.

INT. DEBBIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Debbie carries a cup of tea to the living area, places it
on the coffee table, kicks off her shoes, leans back on the
couch, takes a sip, picks up the notebook, and glances at
the contents. She aspirates the tea and has a coughing fit.

Debbie takes a few deep calming breaths and looks at the
notebook again. She reaches for the phone.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - DAY

Eric studies his computer screen, makes a few notes on a
piece of paper. DARRYL DORSETT, broker of the real estate
company, enters the room. Eric quickly closes the computer
program.

DORSETT
How are you doing?

ERIC
Fine. Just fine.

The phone RINGS.

ERIC
(continuing)
Hello.

(beat)
Debbie, what's wrong?

Eric looks up. Dorsett remains in the room. Eric waits.
Dorsett does not take the cue.

ERIC
(continuing)
I'll be right over.

Eric hangs up the phone. Dorsett studies him.

DORSETT
A problem?

ERIC
No.

Eric starts to stand up, flops back in his seat.

DORSETT
Can I help you?

ERIC
I'll be fine. Just a little light
headedness.

Eric struggles to remain upright.

DORSETT
If you're sure, I'll leave.

Dorsett leaves the room, closes the door.

ERIC'S POV

A hole appears in the door. Dorsett just stands there,
head perked, as if listening for something.

INT. DEBBIE'S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

Debbie flips through the lab notebook as Eric watches.

DEBBIE
It's all here including the last
few steps. I'm seeing this, but
I'm still not believing it. I
can't understand why he'd do this.

ERIC

Geld. Denaro. Moola. Money.
Pure and simple, the almighty
dollar.

DEBBIE
He didn't appear to that interested
in money. All he cared about was
his research.

ERIC
You need money for research.

DEBBIE
His grants were approved but not
funded. Maybe you're right.

Debbie takes a deep breath.

DEBBIE
(continuing)
Carlos is here.

Eric turns his head in the direction of the door.

ERIC
You're right.

Eric opens the door. Carlos walks in.

CARLOS
How did you know I was here?

DEBBIE
I could smell you.

Carlos lifts up his arm, checking on his deodorant.

ERIC
I saw you.

CARLOS
We'll never be able to sneak up on
each other again.

ERIC
Good news, bad news time. We know
the designer chemist.

CARLOS
Who? How?

DEBBIE

Hrovac.

Debbie waves the lab book in the air.

DEBBIE

(continuing)

I got his book by mistake.

CARLOS

Bummer for you, Deb, but great for us. We'll do a full court press. Monitor his every move, check out everyone he speaks to, read his mail. Yes!

Carlos throws his fist in the air.

ERIC

Don't you think we ought to tell Gatter?

CARLOS

Later. We've got a head start. Together we can see all, hear all, and smell all. Oh, I nearly forgot why I came over. Lisa's condition hasn't changed.

DEBBIE

I wonder why her reaction was different from ours.

ERIC

We drank coffee and she had lemon water.

DEBBIE

The citric acid from the lemon may have changed the structure.

Debbie opens the notebook.

DEBBIE

(continuing)

Um. If I could figure out exactly what compound was made, maybe I could do something. Synthesize it, fool around with it.

CARLOS

Do you think you could do that?

DEBBIE

I've had a world class chemist for a teacher.

CARLOS

He's a world class bastard in my book. Let's go find him before he splits.

Debbie puts the lab book in her oversized purse.

EXT. METAL PREFAB BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

Hrovac parks his car next to a beat up truck. Hrovac slams the door of his car, heads for the building.

INT. PREFAB BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

A lab is partially in place. Two burley-looking men stand behind Hrovac. A TECHNICIAN in a white jump suit and mask faces Hrovac.

HROVAC

So where is he?

TECHNICIAN

You needn't concern yourself. Do you have the notebook?

HROVAC

It's in the car. You can do the last steps without me. Keep your money. I want no part of this operation.

TECHNICIAN

Your righteousness comes a little late. You are dirtier than the rest of us. We would have never been able to get this far without you. On behalf of our stockholders, I thank you. A generous contribution will be sent to your memorial fund.

HROVAC

Memorial fund?

The Technician nods to the men. One grabs Hrovac from behind and snaps his neck.

TECHNICIAN

Tidy up.

EXT. PREFAB BUILDING - DUSK

Only Hrovac's car is in front of the building. The building explodes, throwing pieces of metal in the air. Flames reach the car, setting off a second explosion.

INT. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH BUILDING - DUSK

It's deserted. Debbie, Carlos, and Eric walk down the corridor of the research area. The doors to the offices and labs are locked.

DEBBIE

Let's try Hrovac's office. I have a key.

A door down the corridor is open. Debbie runs to it. The others follow.

INT. HROVAC'S OFFICE - DUSK

The room is in shambles. The file cabinets have been jimmied open and the contents are on the floor. Debbie, Carlos, and Eric wander around the office.

CARLOS

It seems we aren't the only ones looking for the bastard genius.

ERIC

See if he has an appointment book.

Debbie goes to Hrovac's desk.

DEBBIE

His desk calendar is gone.

Debbie ruffles through Hrovac's desk drawers. Carlos and Eric sort through the papers on the floor.

DR. BRENT BRADFORD, the well-dressed chairman of the department, stands at the doorway.

BRADFORD

What do you think you're doing?

DEBBIE

Dr. Bradford, I didn't expect to see you here.

BRADFORD

Evidently. I'm calling security.

DEBBIE

But you don't understand. It was like this when we came here.

BRADFORD

And that explains why you are going through his desk.

Bradford dials four numbers on the phone.

Eric grabs Debbie's wrist and pulls her towards the door.

BRADFORD

(continuing)

Security?

(to Debbie)

Stop. Stop, I say.

Debbie, Eric, and Carlos run out of the room and down the corridor.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOONLESS NIGHT

Debbie, Eric, and Carlos run across the parking lot. Eric aims his remote control at a sports car. It BEEPS and the interior lights turn on.

They rush to the car. Debbie sits in the passenger seat. The back seat has minimal leg room. Carlos has a hard time positioning his long legs.

INT. ERIC'S SPORT CAR - MOONLESS NIGHT

Eric snaps on his seat belt.

ERIC'S HAND

slips the key into the ignition. His hand is frozen, no movement.

DEBBIE

looks from Eric's hand to his face.

DEBBIE
Are you losing it?

The motor turns over. Eric shifts gears. Debbie exhales a little of her worry, bites her lip as the car pulls out.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The sports car makes its way through a nearly deserted parking lot. The head lights of a black Taurus turn on. The Taurus pulls out of its parking space as the sports car exits the lot.

INT. ERIC'S SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

A concerned Debbie blankly stares out the window.

DEBBIE
Maybe we should've stayed and explained.

CARLOS
Did that dude look like he'd listen?

DEBBIE
No. But he is the Chairman and is on my research committee. I feel like I just kissed my PhD good-bye.

ERIC
You worry too much. He'll get over it by morning.

DEBBIE
I hope you're right. Of all the nights, he has to pick tonight to come in. He's never here after five.

Eric squints as headlights from the Taurus bounce off the rear view mirror, hits his eyes.

ERIC
Where did that car come from?

Debbie and Carlos turn around and look out the window.

CARLOS
I think we are all infected with a paranoid virus. Speed up and see what they do.

Eric shifts gears. The sports car picks up speed. Carlos looks out the rear window. Eric glances up at the mirror.

ERIC

Well, at least we're not paranoid.

Debbie looks from the road to Eric.

DEBBIE

There's a sharp curve up ahead.
Slow down a little.

ERIC

I will.

ERIC'S FOOT

remains on the gas pedal.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

Hit the brakes already.

ERIC (O.S.)

My foot's frozen.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

The sports car takes the curve too fast, maneuvering to stay on the road. The Taurus follows.

THE DRIVER'S FLOORBOARD

Debbie's foot crosses over Eric's, hits the brakes. The wheel jerks. Debbie reaches over, takes control of the wheel.

INT. SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

The reflected light on the mirror intensifies. Carlos turns, looks out the back window. The glare is too bright. Carlos closes his eyes, concentrates. The sound of SNAP, followed by the WHIR OF A CAR WINDOW OPENING, WIND SOUNDS, the FLAPPING OF CLOTH IN THE WIND. Carlos leans forward towards the front seat. As the sound of a CLICK is heard, Carlos reaches over and yanks the steering wheel to the right. A LOUD WHIZ noise is heard as a

SOUND FREQUENCY GRAPH

of the bullet noise fills the screen.

INT. SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

DEBBIE

What was that?

CARLOS

A bullet. We're target practice.

DEBBIE

Shit!

ERIC

I don't think I could if I wanted to.

DEBBIE

Carlos, pull Eric over to the passenger side, so I can drive.

It's clumsy and crowded. Debbie makes room as Carlos pulls Eric to the passenger side, right over the gear shift, catching him between the legs.

ERIC

Ow! Whoa! Be careful. You are shattering the family jewels.

CARLOS

If we don't get out of here alive, your family jewels are useless.

Debbie maneuvers over Eric to the driver's position, as another WHIZ of a bullet misses the car.

DEBBIE

It's so dark, it's hard for me to see ahead. And our taillights act like beacons in the night for them.

ERIC

You'll just have to turn off your lights.

DEBBIE

Are you crazy?

ERIC

I want you to speed up. And when I tell you to turn off your lights, do it.

DEBBIE
You want me to drive blind?

ERIC
I will be your navigator. Trust me.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

Two sets of headlights wind up a mountain road to a section of road that is straight.

ERIC (O.S.)
Get ready to turn off your lights.
(beat)
Now!

The headlights of the first car go out. The second car slows down some, but is still traveling at a high rate of speed.

THE ROAD

is now seen as monochromatic. The trees whiz by in Eric's night vision.

ERIC (O.S.)
Sharp right!

The car turns off the paved road onto a bumpy, dirt road. The scenery bumps.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

The headlights of the Taurus continue at high speed. The brake lights go on. Too late. The speeding car hits the guard rail, flips over the guard rail, and plummets down the mountain, hitting a few outcroppings of rock as it falls. It finally crashes into a creek bed. A fiery explosion lights up the countryside.

EST. CLIFF AREA - NIGHT

Carlos, Eric, and Debbie look down at the burning car.

DEBBIE
We killed them.

ERIC
Deb, be serious. Maybe we
should've kept our lights on so

they could follow us safely. And then kill us. Come on.

CARLOS

As a lawyer, I think we just saved the county a lot of money and a lot of grief with the incineration of some human garbage.

DEBBIE

I wonder who they were. Why were they shooting at us?

CARLOS

Your evil genius doctor figured out you had his notebook and sent some goons after you.

DEBBIE

We need to call the police.

CARLOS

Okay, we call. But it was an accident and we just happened to see the car take the curve too fast.

DEBBIE

What about the shooting? What about the notebook?

CARLOS

I think we ought to keep that to ourselves. If we give the notebook to the police, things will just cool off. We've got something the evil doctor and his crew want.

ERIC

You are not going to use Debbie as bait to troll for alligators.

DEBBIE

That's my decision, not yours. I know you want to protect me but I am a chemist, a good one, and I want to study that book.

INT. LISA'S ROOM - NIGHT

The television plays the news in the b.g. Debbie sits on Lisa's bed, stroking her hand. The Physician reads Lisa's chart. Carlos and Eric watch him.

PHYSICIAN

No change in the last twenty-four hours.

DEBBIE

And the brain scan?

PHYSICIAN

No change. It's like the drug has fastened to the brain and not let go. If we knew what the drug was, we might be able to pull it off.

DEBBIE

It may not be the drug itself but some intermediate in the synthesis or a variant of that.

PHYSICIAN

It would be easier to find a needle in a haystack, then to find that compound.

DEBBIE

I think it's possible.

The Physician looks at Debbie as if she were a naive dreamer. In the b.g. a picture of the warehouse flashes across the TV screen,

ERIC

Look at this.

Eric turns up the volume on the television. A picture of the crime scene, complete with the charred remains of Hvorac's car, fills the screen.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The police have no leads at the present time. A body was found in the car. The car was registered to Dr. Jon Hvorac, a chemistry professor at the university.

A portrait photo of Hvorac fills the screen.

DEBBIE

Oh, my God!

CARLOS

He got what he deserved. Illicit drugs are evil. Pure evil. He was mass producing evil, torment, and the destruction of innocent lives. I'm glad he's dead. My only regret is that it will be harder to track down the rest of the bastards.

INT. DEBBIE'S APT - NIGHT

Debbie sits on the couch reading Hovorac's notebook. She writes something with a pencil. The doorbell RINGS.

DEBBIE

Who is it?

GATTER (O.S.)

Bill Gatter.

Debbie slips the lab notebook under the couch cushion, walks over, and opens the door. Gatter enters.

DEBBIE

Come in. Have a seat.

Debbie gestures to a chair. She sits on the couch, on the cushion, under which she had stashed the lab book. Gatter takes out a small notebook and pen, as he takes a seat.

GATTER

I guess you've heard about Dr. Hovorac?

DEBBIE

Yes.

GATTER

What do know about him?

DEBBIE

He was a brilliant chemist. Didn't have much of a life outside the lab.

GATTER

What makes you say that?

DEBBIE

He didn't have any hobbies or interests that I knew of. Most people found him boring. All he would talk about was chemistry. We got along well because I liked to listen to his ideas and theories on chemical synthesis. I learned a lot from him. He was my thesis advisor.

GATTER

I know. Dr. Bradford told me.

DEBBIE

You saw Dr. Bradford?

GATTER

Yes. He also told me you had ransacked Hvorac's office.

DEBBIE

It was like that when we came in.

GATTER

We?

DEBBIE

Eric, Carlos, and I.

GATTER

Why were you going through his desk?

DEBBIE

I... I... I was looking for my lab book. He had it and hadn't returned it.

Gatter pauses, stares directly into Debbie's eyes, letting her know he knows her story is a crock.

GATTER

I saw a report where you and your buddies reported a car crash.

DEBBIE

Did they identify the victims?

GATTER

Yes. A couple of thugs connected to a powerful crime family. You want to give me the whole story?

DEBBIE

It was like we told the police.
They took the curve too fast.

GATTER

You are not being completely honest
with me.

Gatter throws an 'I-know-you-know' look at Debbie.

GATTER

(continuing)

Leave the investigation to us.
These people are deadly.

Gatter flips his notebook shut, walks to the door. Leaves.

Debbie ponders for a few seconds, reaches for the lab book
under the cushion, and places it in her oversized purse.

Hurriedly she goes to the kitchen, takes a wad of bills
from a tea tin, and places the money in a zipper
compartment of her purse. She opens a drawer and takes out
a resealable plastic bag.

She rushes into the bathroom, places her toothbrush,
toothpaste and deodorant in the plastic bag, and puts them
in her purse as she goes into her bedroom.

She grabs a few bras and pairs of panties and puts them in
her purse. She punches a speed dial on her phone.

ERIC (O.S.)

Hello.

DEBBIE

It' me. I'm leaving town to work
on the antidote.

ERIC (O.S.)

Wait. I'll go with you.

DEBBIE

No. I'm leaving now.

Debbie hangs up the phone.

INT. DEBBIE'S CAR - NIGHT

An older year subcompact car. Debbie places the keys in the ignition, takes several deep breaths to calm down, starts the car.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Debbie's car travels at the speed limit.

INT. DEBBIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Debbie glances at the rear view mirror. Headlights bounce back at her. She bites her lip, turns the wheel. The headlights disappear, then return in the mirror.

Up ahead is a supermarket. Debbie slows down the car, goes into the parking lot.

EXT. SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Debbie slings her purse on her shoulder as she walks towards the supermarket. She sees the reflection of the car, which had been following her, in the glass of the supermarket window.

Debbie takes an abandoned shopping cart and pushes it inside.

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

Debbie glances around the area, hurries to the Service Desk, grabs a FedEx envelope, places the lab book inside, and quickly addresses it. She takes a bill from her wallet, hands both the envelope and money to the clerk. Debbie fidgets as she waits for the clerk to do the paper work.

The clerk hands the change and receipt to Debbie. Debbie rushes down the cereal aisle, folding the receipt as she goes. She turns her head. No one is in the aisle. She slips the receipt between two cereal boxes.

Debbie pushes through a set of double doors. Overhead is the sign "Employees Only."

EXT. REAR OF SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

The door opens. Debbie looks around quickly. As she walks from the building, she sniffs the air. A figure steps out from behind the dumpster, grabs Debbie from behind, with his hand over her mouth.

INT. CARLOS'S OFFICE - DAY

Carlos makes notes in a brief. GEORGE MINTON, a prosperous-looking man in his early fifties, enters.

MINTON

Carlos, wear a tux tonight. It is a formal affair. Don't embarrass the firm or draw attention to yourself.

Carlos tightens his lips, so he can think before he speaks. He has a hard time taking orders from people he doesn't respect.

CARLOS

My tux is back from the cleaners. Are you giving instructions to your clients on how they should dress?

MINTON

(laughs)

It would be in bad taste to bite the hand that feeds me. I welcome political contributions from everyone. Even those without the social graces.

CARLOS

You mean wealthy criminals and low life.

MINTON

My clients. My clients with generous retainers. Oh, don't wear your earring. I want it to be real easy for the casual observer to separate the good guys from the bad guys.

CARLOS

They need to teach that in law school - good guys wear tuxes and bad guys wear earrings. They're still teaching good guys wear white hats and bad guys wear black hats.

MINTON

You really need to address your anger.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - DAY

Eric types a command into his computer. Bill Gatter enters the office. Eric looks up.

ERIC
Any new news?

GATTER
Unfortunately, it's not good news.
Where is Debbie Tsen?

ERIC
She's gone out of town for a few
days. Why do you ask?

GATTER
Her car was left in a supermarket
parking lot overnight. And her
apartment has been ransacked.

Shocked, Eric sits back in his chair.

ERIC
Is that all you know?

GATTER
Yes. And I want to know all you
know. These are deadly
professionals, we are dealing with.
Tell me what you know. Debbie's
life may depend on it.

ERIC
Hrovac was the designer chemist.

GATTER
We surmised as much when he was
turned into a charcoal briquette.

ERIC
That's not all. Debbie has his lab
book. The one with the drug
synthesis.

Gatter closes his eyes, doesn't move a muscle. He exhales slowly.

GATTER
When did she get it?

ERIC

The night Hrovac got killed.

GATTER

Did you take it from Hvorac's office?

ERIC

No. Hvorac gave it to Debbie by mistake. He had her book.

GATTER

That's the same night the thugs went over the cliff. Any connection?

ERIC

They were following our car and shooting at us.

Gatter walks around the office, irritated.

GATTER

What were you doing in Hvorac's office?

ERIC

Looking for clues.

GATTER

This is not a game. This is life-and-death real. Who do you think you are - the Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew? You screwed up big time. Why didn't you tell me about the lab book?

ERIC

We figured if the police had the book, the operation would shut down for a while. The trail would get cold.

GATTER

So you decided to keep it active with Debbie and the book as bait. You know what happens to bait? Nine out of ten times, it winds up being lunch!

EXT. CARLOS'S LAW BUILDING - DAY

Carlos and Eric leave the building, and head towards a parking lot.

CARLOS

What is it that you couldn't tell me on the phone?

ERIC

They've kidnapped Debbie.

CARLOS

How do you know that?

ERIC

She called last night to say she was leaving town. Her car was found in a parking lot and her apartment had been ransacked.

CARLOS

Did you call the police?

ERIC

Gatter is the one who told me. I haven't a clue on where to look.

CARLOS

Do you have a penguin suit?

ERIC

Huh?

CARLOS

A tux. Minton is having his big fund raiser tonight.

ERIC

He's running for the senate?

CARLOS

Right. And his list of clients reads like the Who's Who of the criminal world. Maybe we can pick up something as to Debbie's whereabouts.

INT. ERIC'S APARTMENT - DAY

Eric enters carrying a tuxedo on a hanger. The apartment has been ransacked.

INT. LISA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Lisa is on oxygen. Carlos sits beside her bed, stroking her hair. The Physician enters carrying Lisa's chart.

CARLOS

What's happening?

PHYSICIAN

We don't know. Her breathing became labored and her O-sats dropped. That's why she's on the oxygen. Her brain scans look the same. Compound X is holding on awfully tightly. It looks like it is getting worse rather than better.

CARLOS

What if we pulled compound X off?

PHYSICIAN

I'd venture a guess that she would improve. But how do we get compound X off? We have no idea what it is.

INT. CARLOS'S APARTMENT - DUSK

It's ransacked. Carlos enters, turns around surveying the damage. He wanders into his bedroom. Every drawer is emptied. It's a mess. Only the tuxedo in the cleaner's plastic remains unscathed hanging on the door. He pulls the tuxedo off the door, throws it to the floor, and kicks it.

INT. WINDOWLESS OFFICE - NIGHT

It's drab, dusty. Sparsely furnished with an old desk, a ripped plastic couch, and several chairs. It has the look of 10 years of abandonment.

Debbie is tied to one of the chairs. Duct tape is across her eyes and mouth. Two thugs with guns are her captors. THUG 1 rests on the old couch. THUG 2 sits on a chair backwards, using the back of the chair to rest his arms as he plays a hand-held video game.

THUG 1

Put that thing away. The beep, beep is driving me crazy.

THUG 2

I'm bored.

Thug 2 continues playing. Thug 1 goes over to Thug 2, takes the game, throws it to the floor, stomps it with his shoe.

THUG 1

Just tell the Main Man you're bored. Maybe he'll book you a suite at the Hilton.

Thug 1 clouts Thug 2 across the head with his hand.

THUG 2

How long are we going to be here?

THUG 1

After midnight sometime. It will be settled one way or the other. I think it will be the other.

Thug 1 laughs, takes out his gun, rubs its tenderly.

INT. ERIC'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Carlos, formally dressed, looks around Eric's living room. It's still trashed. Eric, also formally dressed, fiddles with his bow tie.

CARLOS

I see we have the same interior decorator.

ERIC

They trashed yours, too?

CARLOS

Yes. Either they have the book and are looking for copies or they don't have the book.

ERIC

Copies. We never made copies. We should have.

CARLOS

Why? So more people could synthesize the drug?

ERIC

No. We should have copied the book
and let them have the original.
And make the antidote from the copy.

CARLOS
Without the book, they can't make
the drug. The satanic scientist is
dead. No one else could do it.

ERIC
Except Debbie.

CARLOS
And they have Debbie.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Lavish and elegant. Most of the men wear tuxedos, but
there are some in dark suits, others are in Armani's with
earrings. The women range from dignified matrons to buxom
bimbos. All of the matrons have tuxedoed escorts. A
photographer snaps pictures of the crowd without a flash.

Minton works the crowd like a true politician. Everyone
who is politically, financially, or socially important is
here - the mayor, police chief, district attorney, drug
lords, wheeler-dealers, the university president, Bradford,
Dorsett, Gatter, Eric, and Carlos.

Gatter approaches Eric and Carlos.

GATTER
Carlos, as a lawyer, what does
withholding evidence from the
police mean to you?

CARLOS
Loss of my license to practice law.

GATTER
Good. I'm glad you are aware of
that. Don't forget it.

Gatter walks away. Carlos looks confused.

CARLOS
What did he mean by that?

ERIC
He knows Debbie has Hovorac's book.
I told him.

CARLOS

What's done is done. I'm not going to worry about it.

Bradford, drink in hand, approaches Eric and Carlos.

BRADFORD

You are Ms. Tsen's friends from the other night?

ERIC

Yes.

BRADFORD

Ms. Tsen hasn't been in the lab today. Tell her I overreacted. We need to get together and make arrangements since her thesis advisor is dead. I will be her new advisor

ERIC

I will, sir.

Bradford gives a perfunctory nod, and leaves.

CARLOS

Did we just hear good news or bad news? I can't tell.

ERIC

Good, I think. Debbie will get her PhD. Speaking of whom, we need to get to work.

CARLOS

I need a place where I won't be disturbed.

Carlos surveys the room. His eyes stop at a window at the back corner. No one is near it. He walks over. Eric follows. They stand looking out the window, with their backs to the room.

CARLOS

(continuing)

This should do it.

Carlos closes his eyes concentrating. The OVERWHELMING SOUND OF 30 OR MORE CONVERSATIONS.

CARLOS
(continuing)
Whoa!

Carlos shakes his head.

ERIC
What's the matter?

CARLOS
I need to fine tune and adjust the
volume.

Carlos takes a deep breath, closes his eyes again.

FEMALE VOICE 1 (O.S.)
This is sooo dull. Let's go home
where I can whip up some excitement.

MALE VOICE 1 (O.S.)
Just another fifteen minutes, babe.
I promise.

MALE VOICE 2 (O.S.)
I told my broker to dump all my
health related stocks. It was a
good move.

MALE VOICE 3 (O.S.)
He spends more on scotch a week
than on groceries.

FEMALE VOICE 2 (O.S.)
Look at those boobs. I hope she
pops her saline bags when she gets
a mammogram.

Carlos opens his eyes, turns around, looks around the room.

ERIC
Is something wrong?

CARLOS
No. Just looking.

Carlos turns his back to the gathering. Closes his eyes.

MALE VOICE 4 (O.S.)
I hear you have some company.
Where are you keeping her?

MALE VOICE 5 (O.S.)
The boys have her on the west side.

MALE VOICE 4 (O.S.)
Good. Did you get the book?

MALE VOICE 5 (O.S.)
No. She didn't have it. We
checked her apartment, her lab, her
car, her friends' apartments and
offices. Nothing.

MALE VOICE 4 (O.S.)
I'll send someone to work her over
later tonight. We'll get it one
way or another.

Carlos turns around, eyes scanning the room. He's
frustrated. He can't put a face with the voice.

ERIC
Did you hear something?

CARLOS
Yes. They have Debbie. They
haven't hurt her. Yet. Let's get
out of here.

Carlos and Eric rush out. Gatter watches them as they go.

INT. CARLOS'S CAR - NIGHT

Carlos drives slowly, as if looking for something. It's a
run down section of town.

CARLOS
Monday is going to be the king of
all Mondays.

ERIC
How so?

CARLOS
They did a number on our offices
looking for the book.

ERIC
I can't face that. I may change
jobs and let Dorsett clean up the
mess.

CARLOS

Coward.

ERIC

So where's Debbie?

CARLOS

Here on the west side somewhere.

Carlos pulls the car over to the curb.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Carlos puts the car in park with the motor running. He goes over to JIMMY, a vagrant, leaning against a building.

CARLOS

How's it going, Jimmy?

JIMMY

Not so good.

(looks Carlos over)

You sure dressed up.

CARLOS

My boss made me wear this monkey suit.

Jimmy laughs.

JIMMY

I knew it had to be something like that.

CARLOS

I'm looking for a girl. A friend of mine. She was snatched. You hear anything about that?

Jimmy rubs the rubble on his chin.

JIMMY

Some activity late last night on Marion Avenue.

CARLOS

Where?

JIMMY

One of them boarded up stores.

CARLOS

Thanks.

Carlos stuffs a few bills in Jimmy's hand, turns to walk back to his car. A nondescript car comes up the street, with a gun out the rear window. Jimmy sees it.

JIMMY

Look out!

Carlos looks over, flings his body to the sidewalk. The gun FIRES. The bullet misses Carlos and hits Jimmy. The car speeds away. Carlos runs to Jimmy, lifts his head from the sidewalk. It's a chest wound, bleeding heavily. Carlos applies some pressure to slow the bleeding.

CARLOS

You'll be okay.

Jimmy looks at Carlos, who is covered with blood.

JIMMY

Didn't mean to mess up your suit.

Eric joins them.

ERIC

Help is on the way.

CARLOS

Did you get the license number?

ERIC

No. I was watching you. The bullet is close to his spine. Don't move him. I'll stop the bleeding.

INSERT FLUOROSCOPIC IMAGE

of the internal organs of the upper body. A bullet is near the spinal column. Blood gushes from a severed artery. Two fingers enter the body cavity. A finger presses on the artery, stopping the blood flow.

BACK TO SCENE

Two police cars and an ambulance, with lights and sirens going full blast, reach the scene. Two EMTs come with a gurney. Eric looks up.

ERIC

I have my finger on the vessel.

One EMT places his gloved fingers next to Eric's.

EMT

I got it.

Eric removes his hand.

ERIC

The bullet is near his spine.

The EMT nods.

EMT

Are you a doc?

ERIC

No.

A POLICEMAN interviews Carlos.

POLICEMAN

So what happened?

CARLOS

It was a drive-by shooting. A late model car. They came from that direction.

Carlos points down the street. The FLASH of a camera goes off.

POLICEMAN

Did you get the license?

CARLOS

No. It happened so fast.

The Policeman gives Carlos the once-over. In the b.g. Eric talks with another policeman.

POLICEMAN

What were you doing in this part of town?

CARLOS

We had just left George Minton's fund raiser.

POLICEMAN

And you came here to pick up a
snootful?

CARLOS

No! I don't have to take this.

POLICEMAN

Maybe not. However, you are a
witness. I need your name and
address.

CARLOS

Carlos Rodriguez. Blakemore Arms
Apartments. Apartment 720.

Carlos goes over to Eric, grabs him by the arm.

CARLOS

(continuing)

Come on.

INT. CARLOS'S CAR - NIGHT

Carlos drives away from the scene.

ERIC

What's up?

CARLOS

Debbie's in a deserted building on
Marion Avenue.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Carlos and Eric walk down the deserted street. Carlos
stops, closes his eyes, listens.

CARLOS

This way.

Carlos walks down an alley.

ERIC

What did you hear?

CARLOS

An air conditioner.

Carlos stops and points to an old air conditioner bolted to
a concrete block.

CARLOS
(continuing)
Take a look and tell me what you
see.

Eric looks at the building.

ERIC
I guess I don't do bricks. I can't
penetrate it.

CARLOS
Let's try the window. You do do
wood?

Eric nods, and walks over to the air conditioner. He takes
off his jacket and flaps his arms up and down around the
intake area of the air conditioner.

CARLOS
(continuing)
Eric, you do know you are acting
like a chicken, don't you?

ERIC
If Debbie's in there, I just wanted
to let her smell that we are here.

Carlos flips one hand in the air, goes over and flaps some
body odor into the air conditioner.

Eric walks to the front of the building, stares at the
plywood covering the window.

INSERT MONOCHROMATIC VIEW

of the inside of the building. The outlines of the two
thugs and Debbie tied to the chair are discernable.

RETURN TO SCENE

Eric rejoins Carlos.

ERIC
There's two of them in there.
Debbie's tied up.

CARLOS
Time to put our plan into action.

ERIC

What plan?

CARLOS
I'm thinking. I'm thinking.

ERIC
Great!

CARLOS
I think fast. Don't worry.

ERIC
We can call the cops, you know.

CARLOS
It's too risky. Debbie might get hurt.
(beat)
I'll cut the electricity. Since it's all boarded up, it will be pitch black in there. So A - They can come out to see what's happened and we surprise them. Or B - They stay in there and we, one of us who can see in the dark, and the other one who can hear a mouse fart, go in and surprise them.

ERIC
You know how to cut off the electricity without electrocuting yourself?

CARLOS
Let's say my education has been very diverse.

INT. WINDOWLESS OFFICE - NIGHT

Thug 1 sits on the edge of the desk, checking out his gun.
Thug 2 has his head back on the couch, eyes closed.
Debbie, still bound, sniffs the air. The lights go out.

THUG 1
What's happening?

THUG 2
Maybe we're having a blackout.

THUG 1
Check it out.

Thug 2 flicks a cigarette lighter. He cautiously makes his way out the door into the

INTERIOR OF BUILDING

It's dark except for the lighter. Thug 2 stumbles over some trash. He pulls back the metal latch on the door, sticks out his head. His body is pulled outside.

EXT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Carlos has Thug 2 up against the wall by his neck. Eric takes thug's gun from his waist. Carlos unfastens his cummerbund and uses it as a gag for the thug. Carlos takes the thug's belt, pushes the thug to the ground, and hog-ties the thug's hands and feet behind the thug's back.

ERIC

I know. Your education was diverse.

CARLOS

You stay with him. I'll take care of the other one.

ERIC

You're giving me the wimp job.
Hey, I can handle myself. I am the one who can see in the dark.

CARLOS

You're a preppy.

ERIC

Some of the world's greatest generals graduated from prep schools. I'll name a few for you...

CARLOS

(interrupting)

Okay. Okay. We'll do it together.
He's not going anywhere.

Carlos and Eric enter the building.

INT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Some light from the open door dimly lights the room. Boxes of televisions and electronics are stacked around the room. Eric and Carlos look around as they enter. Silently Carlos closes the door.

ERIC
Looks like they have diversified
their business.

The room goes black, then changes to

MONOCHROMATIC VIEW OF INTERIOR

Eric and Carlos move slowly towards the office. Eric glances towards the office. Thug 1 has his gun drawn and faces the door of the office.

THUG 1
(calls out)
What was it?

Silence.

THUG 1
(continuing)
Is anyone there?

Slowly the thug makes his way out of the office, heads towards the main section. Eric is behind a pile of boxes. As the thug walks by, Eric jumps out.

ERIC
Aye!

Eric gives a direct blow to the thug's gun arm, knocking the gun to the floor. Eric does a flying leap, contacting the thug in the chest. Eric bends down, twists the thug's arm behind his back, raises the thug to his feet.

ERIC
(continuing)
Carlos, open the door and take this
garbage out.

Carlos opens the door. Some light from the street gives some visibility. Carlos picks the gun up from the floor, shoves the thug towards the door.

CARLOS
Nice work, Eric.

ERIC
I was on the Tae Kwon Do team at
prep school.

INT. WINDOWLESS OFFICE - NIGHT

It's monochromatic. Eric peels the tape off Debbie's eyes and mouth, unties her hands.

DEBBIE

Thank God, you're here.

ERIC

Amen.

INT. CARLOS'S CAR - NIGHT

Debbie sits in the passenger seat as Carlos drives. Eric sits in back.

DEBBIE

Why are your tuxes bloody?

CARLOS

Someone took a shot at me and hit one of Hector's addict buddies.

DEBBIE

Is he dead?

CARLOS

No. I think he'll make it. Thanks to hands of our skillful surgeon, Dr. Eric Peters.

Debbie turns to face Eric in the back seat.

DEBBIE

What did you do?

ERIC

I could see where he was bleeding and kept my finger there until medical help came.

(beat)

What happened with you?

DEBBIE

Not much. They really want the notebook.

ERIC

Do you still have it?

DEBBIE

Yes and no. I have it, but it's not with me. It's riding around in a delivery truck somewhere.

CARLOS

Do you have any idea where we should spend the night? Our apartments are being watched.

DEBBIE

Yes. To the one place, they'd never think of looking. To the cabin. I had plenty of time to think. We never checked it out for clues.

CARLOS

The sleeping bags and lantern are still in the trunk.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Carlos carries the lantern. Debbie searches the ground near the door with a flashlight. Eric follows Debbie.

DEBBIE

It hasn't rained since that night, has it?

ERIC

No. Why?

DEBBIE

If they spilled any of the chemical, it should still be there. I could smell it and know at which step they stopped.

CARLOS

Our best bet would be by the creek.

EXT. CREEK BED - NIGHT

Carlos leads the way with the lantern. He stops at the end of the path near the creek.

CARLOS

The creek is not as full. So if there were any spilled on the rocks, it didn't wash away.

Debbie goes on her hands and knees, sniffing the ground. She moves slowly, then stops.

DEBBIE

Yes. There's definitely something here.

Debbie reaches in her purse, takes out the resealable plastic bag, and dumps its contents into her purse. She opens the bag, and turns it inside out over her hand. She reaches down, picks up a handful of the rocks, and pulls the plastic back in place. This way, her fingers never touch the rocks.

ERIC

Now what?

DEBBIE

Take me to the bus station.

ERIC

There are no buses now. You'd be too vulnerable at the station.

CARLOS

Where are you going?

DEBBIE

To my American home.

CARLOS

I'll call for the schedule and drop you off at the bus's first stop. This way if they are checking planes, trains, and buses, we'll outsmart them. You'll pick the bus up in the next town.

DEBBIE

How is Lisa doing?

CARLOS

Getting worse. She's on oxygen.

DEBBIE

I pray to God, that I'm as good a chemist as I think I am.

INT. BUS - DAWN

It's fairly empty - only five passengers. Debbie stares out the window at the countryside passing by. She leans her head back, closes her eyes.

INT. CARLOS'S OFFICE - DAY

The contents of Carlos's desk are on the floor. All the file cabinets have been forced open. Carlos sighs as he surveys the mess. Minton enters carrying a newspaper.

MINTON

You did it this time, Rodriguez.

CARLOS

Right. I trashed my own office.

MINTON

No. This!

Minton slams the newspaper into Carlos's hand.

INSERT FRONT PAGE NEWSPAPER

Headline reads DRIVE BY SHOOTING ON WEST SIDE. Two photos of Carlos are beneath the headline - 1) Carlos at the affair 2) Carlos splattered with blood next to Jimmy. Caption over the photos reads: FRIENDS IN HIGH AND LOW PLACES.

RETURN TO SCENE

MINTON

(continuing)

I can't have this type of publicity. The inference that a member of my firm is on the wrong side of town buying drugs can hurt my candidacy.

CARLOS

The fact is that you are the lawyer for most of the biggest criminals in town. And you know I would never do drugs.

MINTON

What I think I know and what the public thinks they know can make a difference in an election. As for your first point. No one ever considered Johnny Cochran a

criminal because he defended O.J. Simpson. Now clean out your desk.

CARLOS
You are firing me?

MINTON
No. I believe you are resigning to salvage your career.

CARLOS
You're right. I quit! I can't work for a pompous, arrogant, self-righteous son of a bitch, who keeps the drug dealers on the streets.

MINTON
My, my. You really need to address your anger.

Minton leaves the room. Carlos begins to lose his balance. He reaches for his desk to steady himself. Holding on to the desk, he barely makes it to his chair before collapsing.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

It's tranquil. Young women stroll in groups of two's and three's between buildings.

INT. CHEMISTRY LAB - DAY

Debbie and SR. GRACE, a nun in a modified habit, stand near a lab bench.

SR. GRACE
You certainly have had one hellacious adventure. Do you want to hide here?

DEBBIE
Oh, no. I've come to work, not hide. Does Sr. Stephanie still have her mouse colony?

SR. GRACE
Yes. Why do you ask?

DEBBIE
For animal studies. The book I sent you has the instructions for making the designer drug. I need

to reproduce the procedure and find out the active intermediate. Then find a compound which will react with the intermediate to pull it off Lisa's brain. We'll need the animals for toxicity studies.

SR. GRACE

We?

DEBBIE

I was hoping you'd work with me.

Sr. Grace hugs Debbie.

SR. GRACE

Satan and his legions couldn't keep me from it. How are we going to know which compound is the intermediate?

Debbie reaches in her purse and pulls out the plastic bag with the pebbles.

DEBBIE

It's on these stones. I will recognize the odor when I synthesize it. I'd like to know its structure. Do you think Sr. Peter would do a spectroanalysis?

SR. GRACE

Of course. Let's get everyone together - me, you, Srs. Stephanie and Peter. We need to do this as quickly and efficiently as possible.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - DAY

Papers are strewn all over. The file cabinets were pried open with a crowbar. Eric picks up a folder, places it back in the damaged drawer. Dorsett enters the room.

DORSETT

Do you have any idea why your room was singled out for this?

ERIC

Not that I know of. I've been doing routine work.

DORSETT

After you straighten up, give me a
list of what was damaged. I'll
submit it to the insurance company.

Dorsett leaves. The phone RINGS. Eric sits at his desk,
readies a pencil and a note pad as he answers the phone.

ERIC

Eric Peters. How may I help you?

(beat)

Oh, Dr. Bradford. Are you
interested in real estate?

(beat)

No. I haven't seen Debbie. I have
no idea where she is.

(beat)

Yes. I will get in touch with you
if I hear anything. Good-By.

Eric slides his fingers down the pencil, flips it over,
repeats this as he thinks. Ignoring the mess he types a
command in the computer.

INT. BRADFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

It's quite elegant, especially for a chemist. Bradford
dials a number on the phone.

BRADFORD

We still have no idea where she is.
Find out who her friends are. See
if she's shown up at the hospital.
Trace back to when she first
entered the country. She has to be
with someone she knows. That book
is worth billions!

INT. ERIC'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eric and Carlos sit on the couch. Eric picks up a folder
from the coffee table, takes out the paper, and hands the
sheets to Carlos.

ERIC

I thought it a little strange that
Dr. Bradford would be so aggressive
about finding Debbie. So, I did a
check on him using my computer.
Scientifically, the man has the
creative capacity of a cactus.

CARLOS

How did he become chairman?

ERIC

Politics and sucking up. When it comes to kissing butts, this guy has pucker power.

CARLOS

Sounds like a typical bureaucrat to me.

ERIC

I pulled up his W-2 form.

CARLOS

You what?

ERIC

I'm a hacker. O.K.?

CARLOS

Another one of your hidden talents?

ERIC

Let's say it's one of the hobbies I picked up in prep school. The man is very wealthy. He declares three quarters of a million dollars in consulting fees.

CARLOS

Wow! Who would pay that kind of money for a scientific slouch?

ERIC

Three different companies. The names didn't mean anything to me.

CARLOS

Laundering operations, maybe?

ERIC

I'm going to track down who owns these companies.

CARLOS

Since I've been canned by Minton, I no longer have access to their computers. Can you get in?

ERIC

In a heartbeat. Would you like a
list of Minton's contributors?

Very smugly Eric types a command at the computer.

INT. INSTRUMENT ROOM - DAY

Several modern analytical instruments are on tables in a
pristine room. SR. PETER, a middle-age nun, watches as a
graph is generated on a spectrophotometer. When the graph is
completed she rips the paper from the instrument.

INT. CHEMISTRY LABORATORY - DAY

Debbie wears goggles, a rubber gas mask, a lab coat, and
disposable gloves. She works in a hood. She takes a round
bottomed flask off a rotary evaporator. A yellow syrupy-
looking substance clings to the sides of the flask. She
attaches the flask to a reflux condenser.

Sr. Grace, also wearing goggles, gas mask and gloves, hands
Debbie a funnel and a flask containing a clear liquid.
Debbie places the funnel at the top of the reflux condenser
and pours the solvent in. Then she places a heating mantle
under the flask, positions it, and adjusts the rheostat.
She pulls down the window of the hood, takes off her
gloves, and places them in a covered trash can labeled:
BIOHAZARD.

Debbie takes off her goggles and gas mask as she walks
across the lab to a desk, where Sr. Grace sits reading the
lab book.

SR. GRACE

We would have been in a pickle if
we didn't use an anhydrous solvent.

DEBBIE

I'm familiar with Hvorac's short
hand notations. Dash H two O is
his way of writing water free. He
probably wasn't writing this
notebook for someone else to use.

SR. GRACE

What if someone else got hold of
this procedure and wasn't too sharp
a chemist?

DEBBIE

Let me fix that.

Debbie takes a pencil and writes something on the page.
Sr. Grace smiles.

Sr. Peter enters carrying a graph from a spectrograph. She hands it to Debbie.

SR. PETER

It has some amine and fluoride groups.

Debbie checks the lab book.

DEBBIE

I think we are at that step now.
I'll give an olfactory check after the refluxing.

(beat)

I'm going to give you four more samples. The synthesized compound to see if it agrees with the rock sample. Then I'll acidify one aliquot with pure citric acid and another with lemon juice. And I want you to run lemon juice as a control. I think it was the acid in the juice that was responsible.

SR. PETER

When do you think you'll have the samples ready?

DEBBIE

I need to reflux for an hour. I should have the intermediate ready in two hours.

SR. PETER

Good. Then we can compare the two spectra. While I'm waiting, I'll run the lemon juice and get that out of the way.

DEBBIE

I should have the other samples ready in four hours.

SR. GRACE

Great. We can give it to the mice late this afternoon.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) At a taxi stand two men in suits approach one of the taxi drivers. As they speak, one of the men show a picture to the driver. The driver shakes his head. The man hands the driver a bill and a business card. The driver nods in agreement. The two men approach the next taxi that pulls in.

B) At a car rental place two different men in suits speak with the manager, showing her a picture. She shakes her head. One man hands her a bill and a business card. She nods.

C) Two men are at an airline ticket counter, speaking with the agent.

D) A bus driver unloads luggage and packages from the side panel of a bus. Two men approach him.

INT. LISA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

A nurse and a physician hook Lisa up to a respirator. Carlos watches nervously. The physician adjusts the settings on the machine and nods to the nurse. The nurse leaves. The physician approaches Carlos.

PHYSICIAN

Her oxygen level was too low. We had to put her on the respirator.

CARLOS

She's dying, isn't she?

PHYSICIAN

I don't know. I honestly don't know.

The physician leaves. Carlos puts his head on Lisa's chest and sobs.

Carlos feels a hand on his shoulder. He looks up and sees Gatter.

GATTER

I'm sorry.

Carlos composes himself.

CARLOS

Thanks. But why are you here?

GATTER

I was looking for you. Your boss said you resigned.

CARLOS

Yeah, right. I'm an embarrassment to the firm.

GATTER

I read about that. He was a friend of your brother's. You want to give me the rest of the story?

CARLOS

No. Nothing to tell.

GATTER

I figured you'd say that. We are on the same team, you know.

CARLOS

Do you have any leads?

GATTER

Yes and no. Someone has been spreading money around looking for your friend, Debbie.

CARLOS

Not good.

GATTER

Definitely bad. Where is she?

CARLOS

I don't know. She said she was going to her American home. It's some inside joke between her and Eric. Ask him. He'd know.

GATTER

Thanks. I'll do that.

INT. BIOLOGY LABORATORY - DAY

A metal rack on wheels holds twenty clear mouse cages. SR. STEPHANIE, a wisp of a nun, sits at a bench holding a mouse in one hand and a syringe with a plastic tubing at the end. She places the plastic tubing down the mouse's throat, squirts some fluid, and hands the mouse to Debbie. Debbie

places the mouse in a cage and hands Sr. Stephanie another mouse.

SR. STEPHANIE

Is this the last one for this group?

DEBBIE

Yes.

Sr. Grace looks into the mouse cages.

SR. GRACE

Uh oh. All the mice in group A are dead.

Debbie joins Sr. Grace, pulls out the cage.

DEBBIE

Maybe they're unconscious.

Sr. Grace takes a microscope slide, wipes it clean, and places it by the mouse's nose.

SR. GRACE

He's not breathing. What concentration did you use?

DEBBIE

One milligram. This was the highest concentration group.

SR. STEPHANIE

What is your lowest concentration?

DEBBIE

One picogram.

SR. STEPHANIE

That still may be too strong. Make up some ten to the minus three, minus six and minus nine picograms.

DEBBIE

You may be right.

Debbie walks towards the door, slumps to the floor. Sr. Grace runs to her.

SR. GRACE

What's the matter?

DEBBIE

This happens every time I get upset. It will wear off. If something happens and I can't finish this, promise me that you and Sr. Stephanie will continue. I need to give you Lisa's hospital and Carlos's and Eric's phone numbers.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - DAY

Eric sits at his computer. His face lights up.

ERIC

Pay dirt!

Eric sends the information to the printer. He writes CARLOS on a folder, takes the printed sheets, places them in the folder, and puts the folder in his OUT bin. He types a few keys, looks up and sees Dorsett in his doorway. Eric gets up from his seat, pulls a chair out for Dorsett.

ERIC

Have a seat.

Dorsett ignores Eric and walks over to Eric's computer. He reads the screen.

DORSETT

You've been a busy little bee, haven't you?

ERIC

Why did you do it?

DORSETT

Are you that naive or just stupid?
Money. A lot of money.

Dorsett dials the phone.

DORSETT

(continuing)

Security. Come to room 306.

Eric takes a step, grabs on to his desk for support. He lowers himself into a chair.

ERIC

Not now.

(beat)
What are you going to do to me?

DORSETT
Firing you goes without saying.
After that...

Two burly men enter.

DORSETT
(continuing)
...take him to the penthouse.

The two men grab Eric by his arms and lift him out of the chair.

INT. BIOLOGY LABORATORY - DAY

Debbie, Srs. Grace and Stephanie look in the individual mouse cages.

SR. STEPHANIE
I believe we've got a bingo.

Sr. Stephanie pulls out a cage so the others can examine it. The mice scamper around.

SR. STEPHANIE
(continuing)
The weakest concentration didn't
have any effect, but...

She pushes that cage back in place and pulls out three other cages. The mice are immobile.

SR. STEPHANIE
(continuing)
...the next three groups are
comatose. And the mice having the
higher concentrations are dead.
We've got working models.

Sr. Peter enters, carrying some computer printouts.

SR. PETER
I did a literature search. I found
three compounds which would react
with our projected structure. One
is toxic. The other two are well
tolerated biologically. The good

news is that one of them can cross
the blood brain barrier.

DEBBIE

Super. Do we have to synthesize it?

SR. PETER

No. We have it in the stockroom.

EXT. CAMPUS - LATE AFTERNOON

A luxury sedan pulls into a parking space marked, Visitor. Two spaces over is a space marked, Reserved for President. Two men in expensive business suits, MR. MORRIS and MR. ROLMAN, leave the car and walk towards the administration building. These are the men who had interviewed the bus driver earlier.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Mr. Morris and Mr. Rolman sit in chairs facing the desk of MOTHER CONSOLATA, president of the college.

MOTHER CONSOLATA

How can I help you gentlemen?

MORRIS

Our employer, a well known philanthropist, who wishes to remain anonymous at this time, has sent us to look over your college as a possible recipient for a major donation.

MOTHER CONSOLATA

How wonderful. I'd be delighted to give you a tour of our campus and answer any questions.

ROLMAN

We've seen the outside of the campus and would really like to tour the inside of the buildings. Our employer likes to have a structure named after him like a library, dormitory, or science lab. Would it be possible to go inside those?

MOTHER CONSOLATA

Certainly.

Mother Consolata leads the men out of her office.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - DAY

Gatter knocks on the office door, walks in, and looks around. Dorsett enters the room.

DORSETT
I'm Darryl Dorsett, broker and CEO.

Gatter extends his hand.

GATTER
I'm Detective Gatter. I'm looking
for Eric Peters.

DORSETT
I'm sorry. He's not here right
now. Is there something I can help
you with?

GATTER
No. I need to speak with Eric.

DORSETT
Is Eric in some sort of trouble
with the police?

GATTER
No. I believe Eric may have some
information to help me with a case
I'm working on.

DORSETT
If you'll give me your card, I'll
have our secretary give him that
information when he calls in.

Gatter hands Dorsett a business card.

GATTER
Thanks.

Gatter leaves. Dorsett reads the card, snarls, crumples the card, and throws it in the trash can.

INT. CORRIDOR OF BIOLOGY BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

Mother Consolata, Morris, and Rolman peer through a window of one of the doors of the lab.

MOTHER CONSOLATA

This is our microbiology lab. Sr. Stephanie just received a grant to do a molecular genetics study on a protozoan.

ROLMAN

Congratulations.

Consolata beams as they continue down the corridor.

INT. BIOLOGY LAB - LATE AFTERNOON

Sr. Stephanie places a small hypodermic needle on the lab bench and hands Debbie a mouse.

SR. STEPHANIE

Well, that's the last one.

DEBBIE

I'll stay here tonight and watch them.

Mother Consolata, Morris, and Rolman enter.

MOTHER CONSOLATA

This is Sr. Stephanie and one of our recent graduates, Debbie Tsen.

Morris and Rolman exchange grins.

MORRIS

This is exactly what we were looking for.

Rolman shoves Mother Consolata over by Stephanie and Debbie. Morris and Rolman pull out guns and point them at the women.

ROLMAN

You want me to ice the nuns?

DEBBIE

No! Leave them out of this. I'll give you what you want.

MORRIS

And what do you think we want?

DEBBIE

Hvorac's lab book.

ROLMAN
Smart cookie.

DEBBIE
I'll get it for you.

MORRIS
Oh, no. Tell me where it is and
I'll get it.

DEBBIE
It's in my purse over there.

Debbie gestures towards her purse in a corner.

MORRIS
Rolman, you go get it.

Rolman opens the purse, takes out the lab book, and brings
it to Morris.

ROLMAN
I think that's the book. What do
you want to do with them?

MORRIS
We'll have to take them with us.
Go get the car and bring it around.

Rolman leaves.

DEBBIE
Just take me. Leave the sisters
alone.

MORRIS
Go sit over there. The three of
you. I don't want to hear a sound
and no funny business.

INT. CORRIDOR OF BIOLOGY BUILDING. - LATE AFTERNOON.

Rolman walks down the corridor. As he opens the door of
the building, Sr. Grace comes out of another lab and sees
him. She stands and listens. Very cautiously she walks
down the corridor and peeks in the lab.

INT. BIOLOGY LAB - LATE AFTERNOON

Morris motions to Debbie and the two nuns. Sr. Grace
stands in the doorway watching. She moves in behind

Morris, swings her rosary beads so they open like a lasso. It catches Morris around the neck. Sr. Grace pulls on the beads and Morris falls backward.

SR. GRACE
Holy Mother, forgive me.

The gun goes off. Sr. Grace steps on the gun hand pinning it to the floor. Mother Consolata takes the gun from Morris, steps back and aims it at him.

MOTHER CONSOLATA
You son of a bitch!

SR. STEPHANIE
Mother!

SR. GRACE
Mother!

MOTHER CONSOLATA
Debbie, get out of here before the
other son of a bitch returns.

Debbie walks over to Morris, snatches the lab book from his, and races out the door.

EXT. BIOLOGY BUILDING - DUSK

The luxury sedan pulls up to the building. Rolman leaves the car walks over to the window, looks in, and sees Morris a captive of the nuns. Rolman dials a number in his portable phone as he walks back to his car.

ROLMAN
We found the girl and she has the
book.
(beat)
Unfortunately she got away. I
don't know what happened. When I
left to get the car, Morris had her
and two nuns at gunpoint. When I
returned, the nuns had the gun on
him and the girl disappeared.
Morris will be needing a lawyer.
(beat)
The girl's not far. I'll get her.

Rolman turns off his phone, starts up his car.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - DUSK

Carlos enters, looks around the room, and walks over to Eric's desk. He sits in the chair and looks at the desk calendar. His eyes wander to the 'Out' box, picks up the folder with his name on it. He flips through the pages.

CARLOS

Nice work.

The coffee maker is on a table which is blocked from view by the ajar door. Carlos walks over to it, takes a cup, lifts up the coffee pot. It has evaporated down to thick liquid. Carlos frowns pensively and turns the coffee maker off.

Minton meets Dorsett in the hallway.

MINTON

This better be important. I don't usually make house calls.

DORSETT

It is. Let's go to my office.

Carlos perks up. He listens, hears a DOOR CLOSE. He flips off the light, closes the door, walks over to Eric's chair, and closes his eyes.

DORSETT (O.S.)

We are going to need an out of state lawyer.

INT. DORSETT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

It's large and elegant with a sitting area of two wing back chairs and a sofa. Dorsett sits in a wing back chair, Minton sits on the couch.

MINTON

What's the problem?

DORSETT

Attempted kidnapping.

MINTON

Don't give me any details. I'll send over a few names.

DORSETT

Are you trying to brush me off?

MINTON

My campaign is my major concern
right now. My firm has always been
there for you.

DORSETT

Your firm! Damn your firm! You
have always been there. You were
the one getting obscene fees.
Large donations were given to your
campaign.

Minton walks to the door.

MINTON

You got good value for your dollar.
Everything I've done has been legal.

DORSETT

Get off your high horse. Your
hands are dirty like the rest of
us. Check your campaign
contributions.

Minton loses his cool.

MINTON

What are you talking about?

DORSETT

The contributions aren't kosher.
There's blood on that money. You
are with us whether you like it or
not.

MINTON

I was unaware...

DORSETT

Ignorance of the law is not an
excuse. This will make your
campaign stink like a southern wind
passing over a pig farm.

MINTON

I need to think about this.

DORSETT

Do that. But be at the penthouse
ten sharp tomorrow.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The light goes on. Carlos opens his eyes, breaking his concentration. A JANITOR stands at the doorway.

JANITOR

I'm sorry. I didn't know anyone was here.

Carlos picks up the folder, walks to the door.

CARLOS

No problem. I fell asleep. I'm leaving.

Carlos hurries out of there.

EXT. CAMPUS - DUSK

The luxury sedan creeps along on the road. The street lights turn on. A cab heads in the opposite direction. The sedan makes a U-turn and follows the cab.

The cab stops at a dormitory. The sedan pulls over a generous distance behind it. Debbie runs down the steps and into the cab. The cab pulls out. The sedan follows.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The cab travels along the highway. The sedan follows a safe distance behind. It's a fairly open road. A VACANCY SIGN BLINKS at a 1950's sprawling motel. The cab pulls in. The sedan pulls over to the shoulder, cuts off its lights.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

The cab stops at the office. Debbie hands the cabby some money. Debbie walks to the office. The cab takes off.

As the cab leaves the parking lot, the sedan pulls off the shoulder and into the lot. Debbie and the DESK CLERK can be seen in the b.g. The sedan pulls into a parking space. Rolman watches the office.

The desk clerk walks Debbie down the walkway in front of the units. Debbie stops a second to look at the vending machines, then continues to follow the desk clerk. The clerk opens a door for Debbie to look in. Debbie nods. The clerk gives her the key.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

It's plain and cheap. Debbie sits on the bed, picks up the phone.

INTERCUT - BIOLOGY LAB/MOTEL ROOM

Sr. Grace watches as several of the mice in a cage stagger about. Sr. Stephanie calculates some numbers in the b.g. The PHONE RINGS. Sr. Grace answers it.

INTERCUT Sr. Grace's reactions with Debbie's conversation in the motel.

SR. GRACE

Hello. Sr. Grace speaking.

DEBBIE

It's me, Debbie.

SR. GRACE

Thank God! Where are you?

DEBBIE

Safe in a motel ten miles out.
What's happening there?

SR. GRACE

Mother Consolata and Sr. Peter are still at the police station. Sr. Stephanie is here with me. We've got some encouraging results. It looks like the antidote is working. All the mice are awake and are staggering about.

DEBBIE

All the mice?

SR. GRACE

Yes. Sr. Stephanie is calculating the dosage for a human.

Debbie sighs in relief and stretches out on the bed.

DEBBIE

That's wonderful. When do you think you'll be finished?

SR. GRACE

Fairly soon. I'd like to observe the mice a little longer before we do anything.

DEBBIE
Bring the antidote to the hospital.
I'll meet you there.

Debbie hangs up the phone, picks up her purse, and heads for the door.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Debbie rummages through her purse in front of the vending machines. She takes out her wallet. She straightens up. A gun with a silencer pokes in her back.

ROLMAN
Don't make a sound.

Rolman pulls the purse from her, looks in it, and pulls out the lab book. He throws the purse in the trash can. Debbie turns to face him. Rolman takes the wallet from her, tosses it in the trash can.

ROLMAN
(continuing)
We're going to take a little walk.

Rolman puts his left arm around Debbie's shoulders and sticks the gun in her ribs. They walk across the parking lot to his sedan.

Rolman looks around the parking lot. No one is around. He pops open the trunk.

ROLMAN
(continuing)
Get in.

Debbie crawls in the trunk. Rolman looks around again, shuts the trunk.

INT. LISA'S ROOM - NIGHT

A tube goes from Lisa's mouth to the respirator. The respirator makes the rhythmic CLICK, SWOOSH sounds. Two clear bags of liquids drip in her IV.

Carlos sits next to her bed reading Eric's computer printout sheets. He puts a sheet on the bed, flips through the sheets, takes out another one, and checks back and forth with it and the sheet on the bed. He picks up the two sheets, dials a number on the phone, and gets a recording.

ERIC (O.S.)

This is Eric Peters. I am
unavailable at he present time.
Please leave a message after the
tone.

BEEP

CARLOS

This is Carlos. I'm at the
hospital with Lisa. I picked up
the printouts. That's a pretty
slick laundering operation using
real estate partnerships. One
piece of property is listed as an
asset in four different
partnerships. The profitable
partnerships then funnel the money
into the tax paying dummy
corporations. If no one looks
closely, it appears legal. Contact
me when you get in.

Carlos hangs up the phone, takes a pencil and circles an
entry on the sheets.

INT. ERIC'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The answering machine clicks off. A hand pops open the
machine and takes out the tape. The hand belongs to Gatter.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

The desk clerk fumbles in his pocket as he walks over to
the vending machines. The strap of Debbie's purse in the
trash catches his eye. He goes over to the trash can.

INT. BIOLOGY LAB - NIGHT

Sr. Stephanie takes a flask from the autoclave. Sr. Grace
takes several syringes from a drawer.

SR. GRACE

I wish Mother would hurry back with
the car.

SR. STEPHANIE

You are not thinking of driving
tonight?

SR. GRACE

I won't be able to sleep a wink
anyway.

Mother Consolata enters the lab. She's upset.

MOTHER CONSOLATA
They've got Debbie.

SR. GRACE
She's safe at a motel. I spoke
with her a few hours ago.

MOTHER CONSOLATA
The desk clerk found her purse and
wallet in the trash near the drink
machines. It wasn't a robbery.
The money was still in her wallet.

SR. GRACE
Mother, please cancel our classes
for tomorrow.

MOTHER CONSOLATA
There's nothing you can do. This
is organized crime, not a mugging.

SR. GRACE
I know that. We're going to the
hospital. We've got the antidote.
(to Sr. Stephanie)
Is everything ready?

Sr. Stephanie nods.

SR. GRACE
Good. We're off. Say a prayer for
us.

MOTHER CONSOLATA
A prayer? I'm saying the rosary!

INT. LISA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Carlos shuffles through the papers.

CARLOS
Penthouse. Surely one of these is
a penthouse.

He picks up one of the sheets.

CARLOS
(continuing)
I've got it. By Jove, I think I've
got it!

Carlos circles an address, writes it on a scrap of paper. He collects all the sheets and places them in the drawer of the night table. He is in such a hurry, he slams the drawer closed, but it pops out.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Debbie and Eric, hands tied behind their backs, sit on a couch. Rolman and three thugs, Thugs 3,4,& 5 keep an eye on them. Dorsett speaks on a phone.

DORSETT
Yes. I know what time it is.
We've got the girl and the book.
(beat)
That's why I called you. I knew
you'd want to be here.

Dorsett hangs up the phone.

ERIC
Are you going to kill us like you
did Hvorac?

DORSETT
Yes, I will have you killed, but
not like Hvorac. You've been a
major annoyance. I'd like to
squish you like a bug.
(laughs)
I'll do that. Squish, squash.

Dorsett brings his two palms together, and rotates them in a squashing motion.

INT. LISA'S ROOM - NIGHT

The respirator continues breathing for Lisa. Srs. Grace and Stephanie enter the room. Sr. Grace places her hand on Lisa's head, affectionately.

SR. GRACE
You're going to be okay.

Sr. Stephanie places the flask and the hypodermic needle on the bed tray. She pulls the cotton stopper from the flask, unwraps the needle, and fills the needle with the solution.

Sr. Grace picks up the wrapping and walks across the room to the trash can. It is next to the door.

Sr. Stephanie uncaps the short access tube of Lisa's IV. As she injects the solution in the tube, Gatter bursts into the room.

GATTER

Hold it right there, lady.

Gatter grabs Stephanie's arm, stopping the injection.

SR. STEPHANIE

Help!

Sr. Grace steps behind Gatter, kicks him hard in the butt. Startled, Gatter releases his grip, freeing Stephanie. Stephanie finishes injecting the antidote.

SR. GRACE

Did you inject it?

SR. STEPHANIE

Yes.

Gatter pulls out his gun.

GATTER

Move away from the bed, slowly.
Who are you? Do you have some
identification?

Sr. Grace reaches in her pocket, pulls out her driver's license, hands it to Gatter. Gatter looks at the license.

GATTER

You really are nuns.

He hands the license back, and puts away his gun.

Lisa's head jerks. A MUFFLED GASPING SOUND comes from her throat. Her shoulder twitches. Gatter pushes the button for the nurse. The respirator emits a LOUD BEEP.

GATTER

(continuing)

You've killed her!

A Nurse and Physician rush into the room.

PHYSICIAN
What's happening here?

GATTER
These women, ...nuns, just
injected something in her IV tube.

PHYSICIAN
What!

The Physician hurries to the side of Lisa's bed, flips a switch, and the BEEPING SOUND stops.

The nuns exchange worried glances and finger their rosaries as the Physician examines Lisa.

NURSE
What is it, Doctor?

PHYSICIAN
She's fighting the machine. She's
trying to breathe on her own.

SR. GRACE
Hail Mary, full of grace...

PHYSICIAN
Do your praying in the hall. We
need to work on her. I'll speak
with you when we're done.

Gatter ushers the nuns out of the room.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The nuns lean against the wall opposite Gatter.

GATTER
So what's the story?

SR. GRACE
Debbie Tsen was our student.
Together we synthesized the drug
intermediate and an antidote to it.

GATTER
Is that what you injected?

SR. STEPHANIE

Yes.

GATTER

You can't just come into a hospital and inject patients. You should have had the doctor do it.

SR. GRACE

What doctor would do it? An untested drug. He'd be sued for malpractice. We took our chances.

GATTER

Let's hope you didn't just become the angel of death.

The Nurse opens the door to the corridor.

NURSE

The doctor would like you to come back in.

INT. LISA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Lisa is off the respirator. An oxygen mask is fastened to her face. She is still asleep. Sr. Grace sits down in the chair next to the bed. She rubs Lisa's hand as the scene evolves.

PHYSICIAN

What did you give her?

SR. GRACE

An antidote to the drug.

PHYSICIAN

Well, it may just be working. This is the first improvement I've seen since she was admitted.

SR. GRACE

Debbie would be thrilled.

GATTER

Where is Ms. Tsen?

SR. GRACE

We don't know. She's been kidnapped.

GATTER

Good lord! The naivete of
idealism. Nobody listens to the
voice of experience.

EXT - LUXURY APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Carlos parks his car as Bradford enters the building.
Carlos hurries towards the building.

INT - LUXURY APARTMENT LOBBY - NIGHT

A UNIFORMED GUARD sits at a desk in the lobby. Carlos
walks with an air of urgency and speaks to the Guard.

CARLOS
I need to give Dr. Bradford some
information.
(pats the breast
pocket of his
jacket)
It's crucial. Would you unlock the
elevator so I can go to the
penthouse?

GUARD
Please sign the register.

Carlos signs "JUAN VALDEZ". The Guard turns the register
around, reads the entry, and proceeds to the elevator.
Carlos follows him. The Guard turns his key for the
elevator.

The elevator opens, the Guard steps inside, and inserts the
key in the slot marked "Penthouse".

CARLOS
Thanks.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Carlos presses the button just below "Penthouse". He
closes his eyes, and listens for sounds. The door opens.
Carlos presses himself against the panel of the elevator,
as not to be seen. Nothing happens. Carlos peers out.
The coast is clear. He steps out of the elevator.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Carlos looks around. It's quite attractive. He eyes a
heating/cooling vent, walks over, sits beneath it, and
closes his eyes.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
Move over. You're crowding me.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Grummmmmph.

BRADFORD (O.S.)
Debbie, we've been missing you at
the university.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Dorsett works at a computer. Rolman, who is sitting in a plush chair, reads a newspaper. The three thugs stand unobtrusively out of the flow of action. Bradford thumbs through the lab book, as he speaks to Debbie. Eric looks towards Dorsett's computer screen. Eric and Debbie still have their hands tied behind their backs on the couch. Bradford thumbs through the lab book.

BRADFORD
Did you have any trouble with
Hvorac's synthesis?

DEBBIE
You know I didn't.

BRADFORD
Another humble genius. It's a
shame you geniuses never picked up
on the survival-of-the-fittest
theory.

ERIC
And you think you are the fittest?

BRADFORD
It looks that way to me. I'm here
and you're there. I win.
(beat)
Let's get back to business. Did
you make copies of the synthesis?

DEBBIE
Yeah. And I posted it on the
internet so every kid and her
brother can blow themselves up
trying to duplicate it. The ones
who don't blow themselves up can
destroy thousands of lives. It was

the most heinous thing I could think of.

BRADFORD

It's profit. Greed, if you want to get mundane about it.

The computer screen goes to screen saver mode. Dorsett leaves the computer, takes a seat on the large couch.

DORSETT

It's done. Electronically transferred. As soon as the banks open, it's done.

BRADFORD

What about George?

DORSETT

I guess we save on retainer fees. He wanted out.

BRADFORD

He said that?

DORSETT

All he thinks of is his political campaign. We are nothing to him. Nothing from nothing is nothing. He has nothing. Nothing in his campaign fund. Let him talk his way out of that.

BRADFORD

You cleaned that out too?

Dorsett grins maliciously.

DORSETT

We are going to be swatting mosquitoes in Latin America while he's Senator Minton? I don't think so.

BRADFORD

I don't see why we have to leave the country.

DORSETT

Because it is better to be safe than sorry. Hotshot Peters, here,

uncovered our scheme. I don't know if he got that information to his Amigo friend or not.

BRADFORD

You mean Rodriguez? He works for George.

DORSETT

You're right. Minton should be here at ten. I'll get the skinny on Rodriguez and then I'll cut Minton loose. If we get Rodriguez out of the picture, we're home free. Free in the U S of A.

BRADFORD

What about Debbie and her boyfriend?

DORSETT

I'm going to squash them like roaches.

BRADFORD

What are you talking about?

DORSETT

Remember when I suggested we have some diversity in our portfolios? We own AutoCycle. We recycle cars for scrap metal. And we have recycled some people through also. Isn't that so, Rolman?

Rolman smiles and exchanges glances with Thugs 3 & 4.

BRADFORD

Don't tell me any more.

DORSETT

Squeamish, are we?

BRADFORD

That's not my thing.

DEBBIE

Your thing is to have innocent people suffer and die for money. And it's okay as long as you don't have to be personally involved?

Bradford raises a hand to slap Debbie, pulls back.

BRADFORD
Kill them. Slowly.

ROLMAN
Should we take them now?

DORSETT
There's no time like the present.
Untie them so they don't attract
attention.

Rolman nods to Thugs 3 & 4, who push Debbie and Eric from the couch and untie their hands.

Bradford, Rolman, Eric, Debbie, and Thugs 3 & 4 leave.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT LOBBY - NIGHT

Debbie, Eric, Rolman, Thugs 3 & 4, and Bradford leave the elevator. The Security Guard looks up.

GUARD
Dr. Bradford, where's the fellow I
let in to see you?

BRADFORD
What fellow?

The Guard reads the register.

GUARD
Valdez. Juan Valdez.

BRADFORD
What did he look like?

GUARD
Tall, Hispanic, well dressed.

BRADFORD
Rodriguez! How many exits are
there in this building?

GUARD
Two. This one and one to the
parking lot.

The Guard motions to a corridor.

GUARD
(continuing)
Both have to come through the
lobby. The stairway is over there.

BRADFORD
So you see everyone coming or going?

GUARD
Yes.

BRADFORD
Did you see that fellow leave?

GUARD
No. He must still be in the
building.

BRADFORD
Good.

ROLMAN
Do you want us to find him?

BRADFORD
No. Keep to your schedule.

Rolman, and Thugs 3 & 4 escort Debbie and Eric out of the
building.

Bradford dials a number on the Guard's phone.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Carlos pushes the elevator button. He freezes, hears a
PHONE RING. He stops and listens.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Dorsett speaks on the phone.

DORSETT
Hello.
(beat)
Good. You stay in the lobby. I'll
get reinforcements to check the
floors and hallways. He has
nowhere to go.

Dorsett disconnects, dials another number.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

The elevator door opens. Next to the button is a sign "In Case of Fire, Use Stairs". Carlos pulls the fire alarm on the wall, steps into the elevator, presses a button, as the ALARM SOUNDS. The elevator descends, stops abruptly.

INT. LISA'S ROOM - DAWN

Gatter looks out the window. Srs. Grace and Stephanie sit next to Lisa's bed. Lisa moves her head from side to side. Gatter is frustrated as he goes to the phone and dials.

GATTER

Carlos should have been back by now.

(beat)

He's not home. Where can he be?

Gatter hangs up the phone, strokes Lisa's hair. His eye catches the slightly ajar drawer. He opens it, takes out Carlos's sheets.

SR. GRACE

What's that?

GATTER

A big piece of the puzzle. It's called follow the money.

Gatter glances over the sheets, he stops at one.

GATTER

(continuing)

This must be the penthouse.

(beat)

Sisters, I have to leave.

EXT. LUXURY APARTMENT - DAWN

Two fire trucks are in front of the apartment. Most of the tenants are in their night clothes and robes. Impatience fills the crowd.

Six men try to enter. They are stopped by FIREMAN 1.

FIREMAN 1

I'm sorry, but no one enters this building.

The men exchange glances and split up.

The Security Guard and Bradford leave the lobby.

BRADFORD

I'd prefer to wait in the lobby.

GUARD

I'm sorry, Dr. Bradford, but you must wait outside until the building is checked out.

INT. STAIRWAY - DAWN

Dorsett and Thug 5 go down the stairs. The SOUND OF FIREMEN ON THE STAIRS is heard.

DORSETT

I'll go on. You check the floors and see if he's anywhere to be found.

THUG 5

What should I do if I find him?

DORSETT

Kill him.

Dorsett tugs at his leather gloves, continues down the stairs. Thug 5 opens a door to one of the floors.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAWN

Carlos removes a panel from the ceiling of the elevator, hoists himself up, and with some struggling manages to pull himself up through the hole to the roof of the elevator.

The elevator door is half a foot above Carlos's head. He tries to pry the door open. He can't. He examines the framework of the door. He releases a lever. He pries the door open, pulls himself up, so his head is level with the hallway floor. Thug 5 stands there grinning maliciously at him.

THUG 5

What have we here?

Having Carlos's head at his foot level, is just too inviting for Thug 5. He swings his right foot to kick Carlos in the head. Carlos ducks, grabs Thug 5's left ankle and pulls the thug forward. The thug is off balance and flips over to the roof of the elevator. WHIR. The

elevator descends. Carlos hangs by his hands. He looks down. It's far.

CARLOS

No! I'm losing it. Carlos, keep calm. Think tranquil.

CARLOS'S HANDS

gradually lose their grip. The fingers slowly inch from the edge. Closer, closer to the edge. Just as his fingers slide off the edge, a hand grabs his wrist.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAWN

FIREMAN 2 pulls Carlos up. Carlos is limp. The Fireman props him in a sitting position against the wall.

FIREMAN 2

Are you all right?

CARLOS

I will be in a few minutes.

The Fireman looks down the elevator shaft.

FIREMAN 2

Looks like we're going to need an ambulance.

EXT. LUXURY APARTMENT - DAWN

Fireman 1 spreads his arms out to get the attention of the milling crowd. In the b.g. Gatter approaches the scene.

FIREMAN 1

It looks like it was a false alarm.
You can go back into the building.

The crowd heads towards the entrance. Bradford scans the crowd. He turns his head. Gatter stands in his face.

GATTER

Have you seen Carlos Rodriguez?

BRADFORD

No. Does he live here?

Gatter ignores Bradford and pushes his way through the crowd.

Dorsett joins Bradford. Bradford looks in Gatter's direction.

BRADFORD

I'll meet you at the airport.
Bring mosquito repellent.

Dorsett follows Bradford's gaze, nods.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT LOBBY - DAWN

The crowd waits by the elevator. Gatter opens the door to the stairway. Carlos bumps into him, grabs him by the arm, and leads him to the entrance.

CARLOS

Do you know where AutoCycle, the
scrap metal place, is?

GATTER

Yes. Why?

CARLOS

That's where they've taken Eric and
Debbie. I'll fill you in on the
way.

EXT. AUTOCYCLE SCRAP METAL - DAWN

The breaking day does nothing to lighten the gloom of the junk yard. Rolman, Eric, Debbie, and the THUGS 3 & 4 walk to a late model car with the front crushed in.

ROLMAN

Tie them up.

Thug 3 pulls Debbie's hands behind her back and fasten them together with wire, twisting the ends together.

DEBBIE

You're hurting me.

ROLMAN

You don't know the meaning of the
word hurt.

Thug 3 fastens Eric's wrists together even more tightly. Eric winces in pain. The thug pushes Eric towards the car, pulls open the passenger side door, and shoves Eric in.

THUG 3

Move over. I gotta fasten your
seat belt. It's the law.

Thug 3 laughs. Eric scoots his body over to the driver's
side. Thug 3 fastens Eric's seat belt

THUG 3
(continuing)
You're next.

Debbie slides in, stares in defiance at Thug 3.

ROLMAN
Let's wrap this up and get out of
here.

Rolman and Thug 3 stand back from the car. Thug 4 walks to
the cab of the magnet crane.

Thug 4 turns on the motor of the crane. The magnet swings
directly over the car. The magnet is on. CLANG. The
magnet attaches to the roof of the car. It raises the car
in the air.

INT. CAR - DAYBREAK.

The car sways in the air. Eric squirms until his body is
turned so his hands are next to the seat belt release.

ERIC
Unfasten your seat belt.

DEBBIE
I can't. I'm useless.

Eric releases his seat belt, scoots over, makes several
clumsy efforts, and finally releases Debbie's seat belt.

EXT. AUTOCYCLE SCRAP METAL - DAYBREAK

The magnet moves the car over to the crusher. It swings
there.

Gatter's car screeches into the junkyard, brakes. Gatter
rushes out of the car, gun in hand. Carlos follows him.

GATTER
Police! Put your hands in the air.

Rolman and Thug 3 take cover behind one of the cars.
Gatter shoots at Rolman and Thug 3. Carlos looks up at the

swinging car. He makes a mad dash towards the crane. Gunfire spits around him. He takes cover.

INT. CAR - DAYBREAK

Eric looks out the window.

ERIC
The cavalry has arrived.

The car drops suddenly, tossing Eric and Debbie around. Eric turns his back to the door, tries to find the door handle. It takes a few seconds. He pulls on the handle, uses his body for leverage, and pushes against the door. It moves a few inches, stops. The car is inside the crusher.

EXT. AUTOCYCLE SCRAP METAL - DAYBREAK

Gatter, Rolman, and Thug 3 continue to exchange gunfire.

Thug 4 climbs out of the cab of the crane, goes over to then crusher, flips the switch. WHIR.

Carlos makes a frenzied run towards the crusher.

INT. CAR - DAYBREAK -- EVENING

Eric and Debbie slide towards the floor board as the car crumbles around them.

EXT. AUTOCYCLE SCRAP METAL - DAYBREAK

Thug 4 looks up as Carlos charges towards him. He reaches for his gun. Too late. He's tackled.

Carlos reaches up to flip the switch. Thug 4 pulls him back. The WHIRRING continues with the sound of CRUNCHING METAL.

The years of frustration and anger boil up in Carlos which he unleashes in a raw pounding of Thug 4. Thug 4 slumps to the ground. Carlos flips the switch. The crusher stops.

CARLOS
Eric, Debbie, are you okay?

ERIC (O.S.)
Do you have a can opener?

Carlos smiles broadly.

CARLOS
No. But I can get one.

INT. GATTER'S CAR - MORNING

Debbie and Eric are in the back seat. Carlos twists around in the passenger seat facing them. Gatter drives

DEBBIE
I need to get an antidote for Lisa.

GATTER
Your nun buddies have already given it to her. It's a little early to say for sure, but it looks like it's working.

CARLOS
Lisa's going to be fine?

GATTER
The doctors think so.

ERIC
Drop me off at my apartment.
There's still a few loose ends that need tying. I'll meet you at the hospital.

EXT. LUXURY APARTMENT - DAY

Minton grabs the handle to open the door. Reporters and photographers rush towards him. A video cameraman positions himself for a clear view of Minton.

REPORTER 1
Mr. Minton, is it true that a major portion of your campaign funding came from fronts for organized crime?

Minton is speechless.

REPORTER 2
Is it true that all your campaign money has disappeared?

MINTON
My money is gone?

Cameras click.

INT. LISA'S ROOM - DAY

Everyone is here. Lisa, wearing a nasal oxygen tube, sits propped up with pillows. Carlos sits next to her bed. Eric has his arm around Debbie. The nuns sit in chairs. Gatter stands next to them.

CARLOS

How do

LISA

I feel? Pretty good. No, my head doesn't hurt.

CARLOS

How did you know I was about to ask you that?

LISA

I read your mind. You can have no secrets from me.

CARLOS

Damn!
(looks to the nuns)
Sorry, Sisters.

The Nuns smile.

LISA

I am so lucky to have a chemistry genius for my best friend.

DEBBIE

I can't take all the credit.
Sisters Grace, Stephanie, and Peter did a lion's share of the work.

SR. GRACE

We have to pass the credit on to a higher level.

Sr. Grace looks upward.

CARLOS

I have avenged my brother's death. There's one less source of drugs on the street. Except for my ex-boss, the bad guys got away. And took the money with them.

ERIC

Not exactly. With my super vision and superlative memory and computer skills, I rerouted the electronic transfers.

DEBBIE

What are you going to do with the money?

ERIC

I'll turn it over to the appropriate authorities, when I find out who that it is.

GATTER

I hate to be the wet blanket here, but they have lab book for the synthesis. That's a billion dollar drug.

DEBBIE

Maybe not. Dr. Bradford was a bureaucrat. He wasn't a very good chemist.

Debbie looks over at Sr. Grace. They have Cheshire Cat smiles.

INSERT " 1 MONTH LATER "

over a tropical scene with palm trees.

INT. ROOM - DAY

It's an empty room except for hooks on the wall and a bench. White jump suits hang from the hooks. Bradford and Dorsett take suits off the wall and put them on.

DORSETT

Are you sure you know what you're doing?

BRADFORD

Give me a little respect here. I was the chairman of chemistry. Hovorac worked for me! It's so simple even that student did it.

DORSETT

So we'll make millions, billions
from this?

BRADFORD

Yes. After I add water to this
step, we'll be close to finishing
up.

They put on disposable gloves and open a door to

INT. LAB - DAY

It looks just like the first lab. A yellow liquid bubbles
up through a reflux condenser. Bradford pours water
through the top of the condenser. The water hits the
yellow liquid.

EXT. STUCCO BUILDING - DAY

The building is surrounded by palm trees and tropical
plants. It explodes!

FADE OUT:

THE END